

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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FM AMCONSUL MEDAN

TO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

INFO SECSTATE WASH DC 850

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEDAN 0099

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, LY, ID, MY

SUBJECT: MALAYSIAN POLITICIAN'S CONNECTION WITH INDONESIAN MUSLEM
ESTREMESTS

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 2276

1. SUMMARY. ALTHOUGH GOI AUTHORITIES OCCASIONALLY HINT DARKLY AT POSSIBLE LIBYAN OR SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN THE INDONESIAN EXTREMIST MUSLIM MOVEMENTS, SUCH AS THE KOMANDO JIHAD, AND ALTHOUGH SOME PRESS REPORTING ON THE TIMZAR ZUBIL TRIAL IN MEDAN TOLD OF APPROACHES OF THE KOMANDO JIHAD TO THE LIBYAN EMBASSY IN KUALA LUMPUR, CONSULATE MEDAN HAS NO EVIDENCE THAT LIBYA HAS IN FACT PROVIDED ANY SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OR ANY MILITARY ASSISTANCE AT ALL TO THEM. OUR INFORMATION WOULD ALSO TEND TO SUPPORT MALAYSIAN POLITICIAN SANUSI JUNED'S CLAIM THAT HE
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HAS NOT LENT SUPPORT TO THESE MUSLIM EXTREMISTS. END SUMMARY

2. WE CAN FIND NO REFERENCE BY NAME TO MALAYSIAN PARLIAMENTARIAN AND YOUTH LEADER, SANUSI JUNED, IN THE INDONESIAN PRESS ACCOUNTS OF THE RECENT TRIAL OF MUSLIM EXTREMIST, TIMZAR ZUBIL, WHO CONFESSED TO THE CHRISTMAS 1976 BOMBINGS IN MEDAN. (BACKGROUND NOTE: TIMZAR WAS CONVICTED AND SENTENCED

TO DEATH MARCH 7 FOR SUBVERSION AS PART OF AN ALLEGED CONSPIRACY ORGANIZED BY A GROUP CALLED KOMANDO JIHAD, A MOSLEM EXTREMIST GROUP SUPPOSED TO HAVE GROWN OUT OF THE OLD DARUL ISLAM MOVEMENT AIMING TO ESTABLISH AN ISLAMIC STATE IN INDONESIA. THERE IS DISAGREEMENT IN INDONESIAN CIRCLES ABOUT WHETHER KOMANDO JIHAD REALLY EXISTS OR WHETHER IT HAS BEEN TOTALLY INVENTED BY THE GOVERNMENT AS A PRETEXT FOR TAKING ACTION AGAINST DISSENTING MOSLEMS. WHILE THERE IS INSUFFICIENT NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION OF THE VARIOUS LITTLE GROUPS TO SPEAK OF A NATIONAL KOMANDO JIHAD, MUSLIM EXTREMISTS, SOME OF WHOM ORIGINATED IN THE DARUL ISLAM MOVEMENT, ARE STILL AROUND. THEY ARE FOUND IN SMALL NUMBERS IN A FEW POCKETS OF SUMATRA AS WELL AS IN JAVA AND THEY DO OCCASIONALLY ENGAGE IN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. NONE OF THESE EFFORTS CONSTITUTES A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE GOI, BUT THE GOI DOES LIKE TO PLAY THEM TO THE HILT, AS IT HAS DONE WITH THE TIMZAR ZUBIL TRIAL, AS A POLITICAL WEAPON TO HELP KEEP THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY AT BAY.) ONE OF THE WITNESSES AT THE TIMZAR TRIAL, RIVAI AHMAD, IS QUOTED, HOWEVER, AS SAYING THAT WHEN HE WENT TO KUALA LUMPUR WITH ORDERS TO CONTACT THE LIBYAN EMBASSY, HE STAYED SIX WEEKS AT THE HOME OF THE HUSBAND OF ONE OF DAUD BEUREUEH'S GRANDDAUGHTERS BEFORE GOING ON TO SEE OLD DARUL ISLAM FRIENDS IN KOREA.

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3. I BROUGHT THE AFP ARTICLE, WHICH NO ONE HERE HAD SEEN BEFORE, TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ACTING MALAYSIAN CONSUL IN MEDAN (BUT MENTIONED NOTHING ELSE IN THE REFTEL) AND ASKED FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF THIS REPORT. HE SAID SANUSI IS ACTUALLY THE GRANDSON-IN-LAW, NOT THE GRANDSON, OF DAUD, THE OLD AND STILL VENERATED FORMER DARUL ISLAM LEADER WHO LIVES IN ACEH. THIS THUS GAVE SOME CREDENCE TO RIVAI'S TESTIMONY, BECAUSE BY CALLING ON OLD FAMILY TIES, RIVAI, WHO SAYS HE IS CLOSE TO DAUD, MAY WELL HAVE STAYED WITH SANUSI AND HIS WIFE IN KUALA LUMPUR. THE CONSUL THOUGHT THIS WAS THE ONLY CONNECTION, HOWEVER. THE GRANDDAUGHTER, HE EXPLAINED, WAS BORN IN NORTHERN MALAYSIA INTO A COMMUNITY OF ABOUT 40,000 ACEHNESE DESCENDANTS WHO ONCE MAINTAINED CLOSE CONTACT WITH RELATIVES ACROSS THE MALACCA STRAITS IN ACEH, BUT SELDOM DID SO NOW. HE ADDED HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE GRANDDAUGHTER AND SANUSI HAD NEVER MET DAUD NOR, AS FAR AS HE KNEW, HAD SANUSI EVER BEEN TO SUMATRA.

4. INDONESIAN PRESS REPORTING CONCERNING RIVAI'S ACCOUNT OF HIS TRIP TO KUALA LUMPUR HAS BEEN TOTALLY CONTRADICTORY. THE MEDAN PRESS QUOTED RIVAI AS SAYING AT THE TRIAL

THAT HE DID GO TO KUALA LUMPUR TO APPROACH THE LIBYAN EMBASSY ON ORDERS FROM AN OLD DARUL ISLAM LEADER NAMED GAOS TAUFIK, BUT THAT HE NEVER APPROACHED THE EMBASSY WHEN HE ARRIVED BECAUSE HE FORGOT HIS LETTER OF AUTHORITY. THE GOVERNMENT NEWS AGENCY ANTARA QUOTED RIVAI, ON THE OTHER HAND, AS SAYING THAT THE KOMANDO JIHAD HAD MANAGED TO OBTAIN ARMS AND FINANCIAL AID FROM THE LIBYAN EMBASSY DURING HIS TWO TRIPS THERE IN 1975 AND THAT THERE WERE PLANS TO SEND FIVE YOUTHS FROM EVERY PROVINCE IN INDONESIA TO LIBYA FOR MILITARY TRAINING.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MEDAN 0099

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5. MY DISCUSSIONS BOTH WITH INDONESIAN MILITARY/ INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS IN NORTHERN SUMATRA AND WITH THE MALAYSIAN CONSULATE OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS SUPPORT THE SUPPOSITION THAT IF ANY CONTACT WAS MADE BY KOMANDO JIHAD OR OTHER DISSIDENT GROUPS WITH THE LIBYAN EMBASSY, IT PRODUCED LITTLE

,
IF ANYTHING. LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF LIBYAN ASSISTANCE TO SUMATRAN DISSIDENTS, NOT ONLY IN REGARD TO KOMANDO JIHAD TYPE ACTIVITIES, BUT ALSO IN REGARD TO THE MUSLIM DISSIDENT GROUP CURRENTLY OPERATING IN ACEH CALLED THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT FOR ACEH. LAST YEAR LIBYAN PAMPHLETS WERE FOUND IN ACEH,

BUT TO DATE NO MODERN WEAPONS NOR SIGNS OF AFFLUENCE
IN THE DISSIDENT GROUPS HAVE COME TO LIGHT, ACCORDING TO
THE STATEMENT OF A MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OFFICER TO ME
LAST WEEK. THE MALAYSIAN ACTING CONSUL SAID THAT FROM WHAT
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HE KNEW, RIVAI NEVER WENT TO THE LIBYAN EMBASSY AND HE
HAD NO INFORMATION INDICATING RECENT LIBYAN FINANCIAL
OR MILITARY SUPPORT TO INDONESIA'S MUSLIM EXTREMISTS
THROUGH OTHER CONNECTIONS. (NOTE: THE FORMER MALAYSIAN
CONSUL HERE DID TELL ME BEFORE HE DEPARTED A FEW MONTHS
AGO THAT HE THOUGHT LIBYA HAD PROVIDED SOME
FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE LOCAL KOMANDO JIHAD GROUP
IN THE PAST, ALTHOUGH HE WOULD GIVE NO DETAILS;
HENCE, THERE REMAINS AN OUTSIDE POSSIBILITY THAT
LIBYA HAS PROVIDED SOME TOKEN SUPPORT.)

6. THE ROLE OF DAUD BEUREUH IN THE EFFORT TO APPROACH
THE LIBYANS IN KUALA LUMPUR IS ANOTHER SUBJECT OF
CONFLICTING TESTIMONY AND OPINION. SOME WITNESSES AT THE
TRIAL SAID DAUD HIMSELF SIGNED THE LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION
TO THE LIBYAN EMBASSY. AND DAUD'S NAME WAS
FREQUENTLY RAISED AT THE TRIAL AS HAVING BEEN A SUPPORTER
OF KOMANDO JIHAD ACTIVITIES. RIVAI, IN CONTRAST,
SPOKE OF BEING COUNSELLED BY DAUD BEFORE HIS TRIP TO
KUALA LUMPUR AGAINST TAKING ANY ACTION
THAT COULD DAMAGE THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY. FURTHER, MANY OBSERVERS
QUESTION DAUD'S PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT, ARGUING
THAT HIS NAME IS LIBERALLY USED ALL THE TIME IN LOCAL
MUSLIM CIRCLES IN SUPPORT OF ONE CAUSE OR ANOTHER. INDEED,
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED TO ME PRIVATELY
THAT THEY HAVE NOTHING CONCRETE CONCERNING HIS COMPLICITY IN
MUSLIM TERRORIST PLANS. THERE HAS BEEN, NONETHELESS,
A SEEMING GOVERNMENT EFFORT TO USE THE TIMZAR ZUBIL TRIAL
TO DISCREDIT DAUD, IF POSSIBLE, IN THE EYES
OF THE PUBLIC BECAUSE OF SOME LINGERING OFFICIAL SUSPICION THAT HE
IS GIVING AT LEAST HIS VERBAL SUPPORT TO THE NATIONAL
LIBERATION FRONT FOR ACEH.

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7. ONE FINAL COMMENT IS THAT IN SPITE OF WHAT LOCAL
OFFICIALS SAY PRIVATELY ABOUT THERE BEING NO PROOF, THE
ISSUE OF POSSIBLE LIBYAN INVOLVEMENT WITH THE INDONESIAN
MUSLIM EXTREMISTS SEEMS NEVER QUITE LAID TO REST. ALONG
WITH REPORTING LIKE ANTARA'S ON THE TIMZAR ZUBIL TRIAL,

FUZZY STATEMENTS ARE PRONOUNCED IN JAKARTA FROM TIME TO TIME BY MILITARY AUTHORITIES HINTING DARKLY AT LIBYAN AND SOVIET INVOLVEMENT WITH AREA'S ISLAMIC SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS AS A MEANS OF UNDERMINING SOUTHEAST ASIAN GOVERNMENTS. THE AUTHORITIES APPEAR TO FIND THESE RED HERRING ALLEGATIONS A CONVENIENT WAY OF EXPLAINING TO THE PUBLIC CONTINUING EXTREMIST ACTIVITIES AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, AS A WAY OF DISCOURAGING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THEM.
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